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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/090,468	03/04/2002	Craig A. Willkens	55567	5103

21874 7590 10/03/2002

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EXAMINER

JEFFERY, JOHN A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3742

DATE MAILED: 10/03/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/090,468

Applicant(s)

WILLKENS, CRAIG A.

Examiner

John A. Jeffery

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 12 and 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-11 and 14-19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Improper Multiple Dependent Claims

Claims 4-11 and 14-19 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot depend from another multiply dependent claim. See MPEP 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims have not been further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102 or 103(a)

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under subsection (f) and (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person.

Claims 1-3, 12, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Axelson (US5705261) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Axelson (US5705261) in view of Willkens et al (US5786565). Axelson

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(US5705261) discloses a ceramic igniter comprising a conductive zone 16, "power booster zone" 14 of higher resistivity, and "hot zone" 12 of highest resistivity. See col. 4, lines 37-55. The "power booster zone" 14 comprises about 50-70 v/o nitride ceramic and about 30-50 v/o MoSi_2 and SiC in a 1:1 volume ratio. See col. 4, lines 44-46. In view of this composition, the booster zone 14 would inherently have a PTCR. If this inherency is disputed, then Applicant is referred to Willkens et al (US5786565) where, in col. 4, lines 1-17, the hot zone of the igniter is described as having a PTCR which has a composition of (1) between 50-75 v/o of a nitride ceramic, (2) 10-45 v/o SiC, and (3) between 8.5-15 v/o MoSi_2 . In view of the similarity of composition between the zone having a PTCR in Willkens et al (US5786565) with the "power booster zone" 14 of Axelson (US5705261), the PTCR characteristics would not only be inherent to the zone 14 of Axelson (US5705261), but also would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. With regard to sintering the ceramic, Axelson (US5705261) in col. 5, lines 45-49 discloses that the ceramic igniter was prepared "in accordance with the teachings of the Washburn patent [i.e., US5045237]" which discloses a sintering process.

Other Pertinent Prior Art


The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The art should be both separately considered and considered in conjunction with the previously cited prior art when responding to this action.

US 361, US 201, US 107, US 087, US 051, US 959, US 727, US 476, US 508, US 618 disclose igniters with varying resistivity relevant to the instant invention.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John A. Jeffery at telephone number (703) 306-4601 or fax (703) 305-3463. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM EST. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0861.


JOHN A. JEFFERY
PRIMARY EXAMINER

9/5/02